A Note from the Publisher

I'm sitting here in my nice quiet office after walking through a beautiful spring morning to work. Nothing remarkable about that you say? Obviously you are not from Ontario, where spring is precious. This morning, I walked past the city park where the lake has melted and the ducks are no longer forced to skate across ice on their webbed feet. They sounded pleased to be swimming again. I watched kids hopping and running to school, through streets no longer clogged with four and five foot snow banks. Their voices carried down through the streets like the chattering of squirrels. The release from winter is only temporary, I'm sure. After all, it's only February 22nd, as I write this. But the respite is leaving me refreshed and feeling energetic. I just thought that the feelings were too nice to keep to myself, so I'd share them with you. Big cities can be exciting and glamorous, but the smaller towns have a quiet beauty all their own.

Having taken that breather, let's go on to business. We've gotten good response to our "art sale" we advertised in issue #58. There is one suggestion I'd like to make, however. When you order a page by number it can be confusing because we don't number the pages in Cerebus. So, to insure that we understand which page you want, please quote from either the first panel in the page, or a very prominent panel. This will be a double-check against the page number for us when we send it to you. Since we are speaking of art, I would like to comment on the fact that I am still getting quite a few submissions in the mail. If you are going to be at Petuniacon, please hold your samples until then. I will be taking several hours out of my schedule just for the purpose of reviewing new artists portfolios. So if you are thinking of going, why not save it for a time when I can look at it and talk to you about what I see? Please understand that I will not be making decisions to publish at the con. I will bring back possibilities if I think Dave and I need to discuss a particular artist in more detail, as all our publishing decisions are made jointly. Also - if you like to meet and talk to artists, there will be a "Meet the Artists" party on the Friday night (April 20th) of Petuniacon. Besides Dave and myself, Arn Saba, Bill Loebs and Valentino will all be there from Aardvark-Vanaheim. If you look over the guest list on the back cover, you should see some familiar names. There will probably be twice as many guests as we have listed because not all confirmations were in by the time Dave did the ad. One late addition to the guest list is Mike Friedrich, who will be at Petuniacon celebrating the tenth anniversary of Star*Reach Productions. I have to, also, apologize for the mis-spelling of Gary Winnik's name in our back-cover ad. Sorry Gary.

I hope that I will see many of you at the "Meet the Artists" party. If you can't make it, perhaps you can come to the Fan Club Meeting. In any event, I hope we will see you there. Take care, until next month!

Deni

CEREBUS

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AARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRESENTS

CEREBUS

60
MAR

$2
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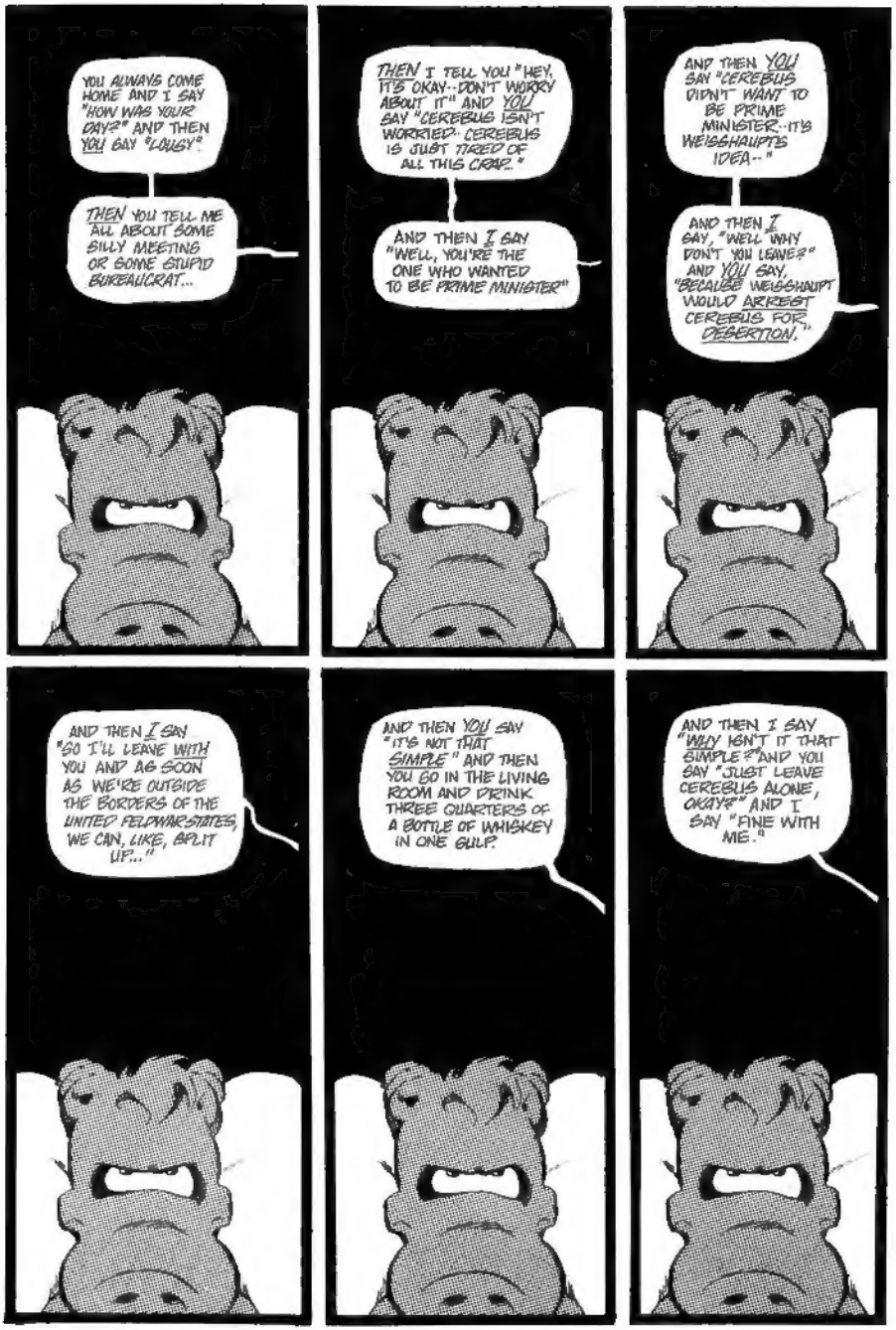
SOPHIA

WELL, WHY DON'T YOU FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU WANT TO DO?
ALL YOU EVER DO IS COMPLAIN ABOUT BEING THE PRIME MINISTER, RIGHT?


YOU ALWAYS COME HOME AND I SAY "HOW WAS YOUR DAY?" AND THEN YOU SAY "LOUSY".
THEN YOU TELL ME ALL ABOUT SOME SILLY MEETING OR SOME STUPID BUREAUCRAT...
THEN I TELL YOU "HEY, IT'S OKAY--DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT" AND YOU SAY "CEREBUS ISN'T WORRIED. CEREBUS IS JUST TIRED OF ALL THIS CRAP."
AND THEN I SAY "WELL, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTED TO BE PRIME MINISTER"
AND THEN YOU SAY "CEREBUS DIDN'T WANT TO BE PRIME MINISTER--IT'S WEISSHAUPT'S IDEA--"
AND THEN I SAY, "WELL WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE?" AND YOU SAY, "BECAUSE WEISSHAUPT WOULD ARREST CEREBUS FOR DESERTION."
AND THEN I SAY "SO I'LL LEAVE WITH YOU AND AS SOON AS WE'RE OUTSIDE THE BORDERS OF THE LIMITED FELDWAR STATES, WE CAN, LIKE, SPLIT UP..."
AND THEN YOU SAY "IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE" AND THEN YOU GO IN THE LIVING ROOM AND DRINK THREE QUARTERS OF A BOTTLE OF WHISKEY IN ONE GULP.
AND THEN I SAY "WHY ISN'T IT THAT SIMPLE?" AND YOU SAY "JUST LEAVE CEREBUS ALONE, OKAY?" AND I SAY "FINE WITH ME."

SURE ENOUGH, FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, YOU'RE TIRED OF BEING LEFT ALONE AND YOU COME BACK IN THE BEDROOM, LOOKING LIKE SOMEONE JUST SHOT YOUR BEST FRIEND AND YOU SAY SOMETHING LIKE, "YOU DON'T WANT TO STAY WITH CEREBUS, DO YOU?"
WHICH IS REALLY WEIRD, SINCE THE REASON THAT YOU BECAME THE PRIME MINISTER IS THAT YOU SUPPOSEDLY WANT A DIVORCE...
SO I SAY, "I'LL STAY HERE UNTIL SOMETHING BETTER COMES ALONG, SAME AS YOU."
AND THEN YOU SAY "YOU'RE ONLY STAYING HERE BECAUSE OF ALL OF THE FREE MONEY AND SERVANTS AND CHOCOLATE AND SPICES."
AND THEN I SAY "SURE I AM. SAME AS YOU."
THAT'S USUALLY WHEN YOU BREAK SOMETHING BIG AND FRAGILE THAT MAKES AN AWFUL MESS. AND THEN I START TO CLEAN IT UP AND YOU SAY "WE HAVE SERVANTS FOR THAT."

HENROT-GUTCH
SHE'S A GOOD GIRL, MR. BLAKELY ...
A LOVELY SWEET CHILD

SHE WAS ALWAYS QUITE SECRETIVE, HOWEVER
HEY! HEY, YOU!! BRAT...!
GIT OUTTA THAT PEAR TREE NOW!
THAT'S NOT A TOY!
I HEARD THAT! I HEARD THAT!
SMART MONKEY EH? THINK YER A SMART MONKEY!
WHERE'S ME BRICK?
BLANKETY-BLANK... NO GOOD...
WHERE'S ME DAMN...
AHA!
CHEW ON THIS, SMART BOY!
POW!
HAHAAHA HAHAHAA

I HOPE IT'S BROKEN Y' LITTLE SWINE!
AHEM !
AS I WAS SAYING MR. BLAKELY, SOPHIA WAS SECRETIVE EVEN AS A CHILD...
SHE NEVER BROUGHT HER LITTLE PLAYMATES HOME TO MEET ME...
END

ASTORIA

"THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED FELDWAR STATES"

HE BELIEVES THAT HE'S ALREADY WON...

ACTS AS IF THIS IS SOME RIDICULOUS SUMMER PAGEANT TO CELEBRATE HIS SELF-DECLARED CORONATION...

THREE POPES DEAD WITHIN A MATTER OF MONTHS -- A CONSENSUS OF CITY-STATES, MONEY PEDDLERS, PARASITES AND MISGUIDED TARINITES APPLAUDING HIS EVERY BREATH AND HEART-BEAT

AND, IN UPPER FELDA, CIRIN SITS IDLY BY, HER ARMIES WELL-FED, WELL-PAID AND NOWHERE TO BE SEEN...

SHE WISHES -- AND I QUOTE "TO OBSERVE HIS EXTRAORDINARY METHODS AT SOME LENGTH BEFORE RENDERING A VERDICT ON WHETHER THEY REPRESENT A CLEAR AND IMMINENT DANGER TO OUR CAUSE OF MATERNAL FREEDOM."

ONE RATHER SUPPOSES THAT IF SHE SAW AN ELEPHANT ATTEMPTING TO BALANCE ON ITS TRUNK THAT SHE WOULD RUN UNDERNEATH IT FOR THE SAME REASON...

FLIP

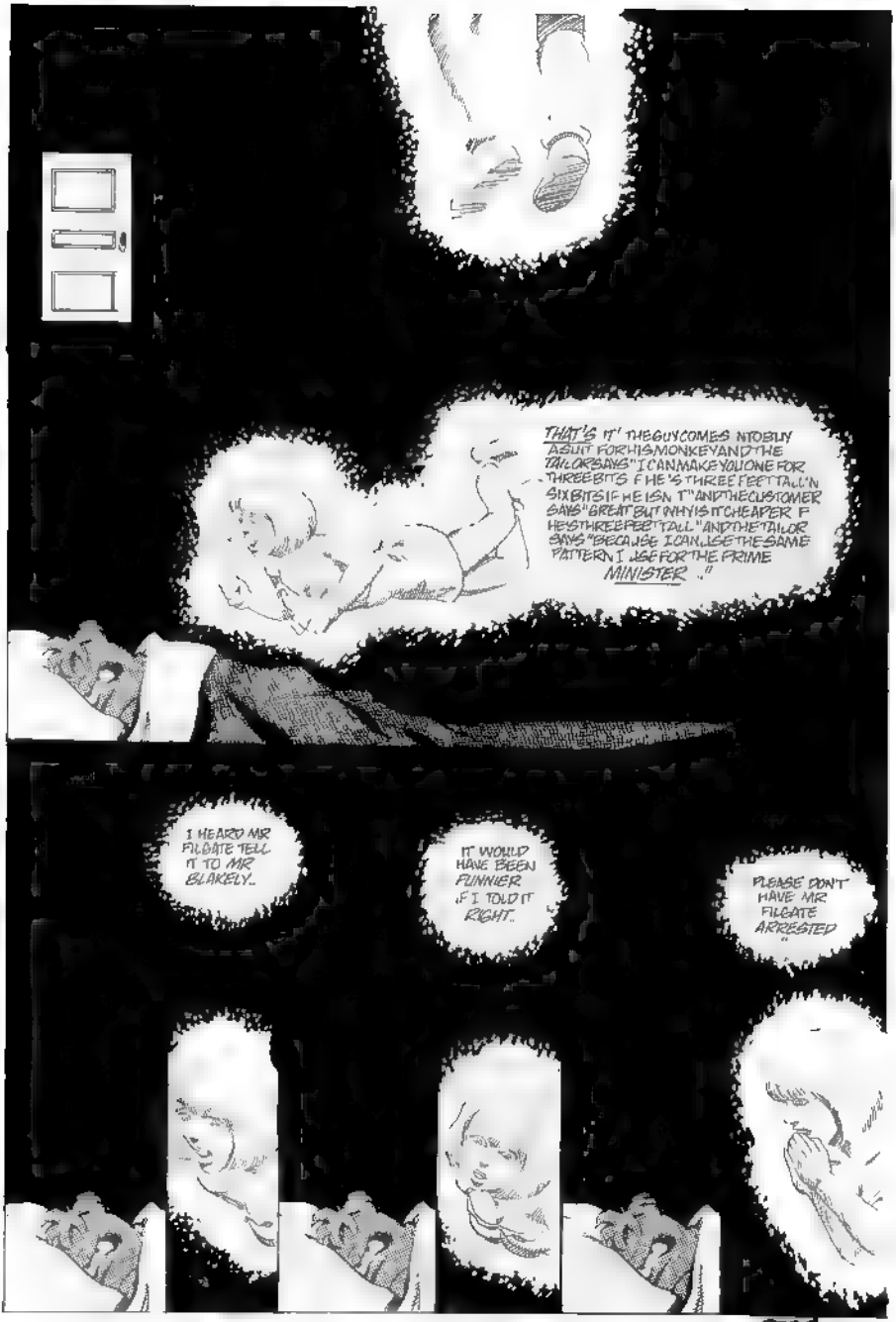
FLUTTER FLUTTER

WEISHAUPT IS A LARGE, DANGEROUS AND VERY CLUMSY BUFFOON... MASQUERADING AS A VISIONARY
HE'S OUT OF HIS LEAGUE ALREADY AND HE'S TRYING TO COMPENSATE BY CLIMBING FASTER...
THE TEMPTATION, OF COURSE, IS TO VIEW HIM AS A MOTH, BENT ON SELF-IMMOLATION IN THE CANDLE-FLAME OF POLITICAL EVENTS...
I FEAR, HOWEVER, THAT HE MORE CLOSELY RESEMBLES...
THE ELEPHANT.
end

THERE'S THIS TAILOR SEE?
AND HE SAYS TO THIS CUSTOMER WHO COMES IN HIS STORE HE SAYS.
"WOULD YOU LIKE TO BUY A SUIT FOR HALF PRICE?" AND THE CUSTOMER SAYS
NO WAIT
THE CUSTOMER ASKS THE TAILOR IF HE HAS ANY SUITS THAT ARE HALF PRICE YEAH THAT'S IT
AND THE TAILOR SAYS "YES"
SO THE CUSTOMER BUYS ONE AND THE TAILOR SAYS, "DO YOU THINK I WILL FIT?"

NO I FORGOT THE CUSTOMER SAYS THIS DOESN'T FIT"!
HE TRIES IT ON...
AND HE SAYS "THIS DOESN'T FIT"!
AND THEN...
THEN
OH YEAH!
AND THEN HE ASKS "WHAT SIZE IS IT ANYWAY?" AND THE TAILOR SAYS "IT'LL PROBABLY FIT YOUR PET MONKEY!"
HAHA
HAHA

NO I GOT IT WRONG. HOLD ON
UM
UM.
OH YEAH!
THE CUSTOMER SAYS "THIS IS TOO SMALL. IT WOULDN'T FIT MY PET MONKEY."
AND THE TAILOR SAYS
"I CAN'T HELP IT IF YOUR MONKEY IS TALLER THAN THE PRIME MINISTER."
UM
NO


THAT'S IT' THE GUY COMES INTO BUY A SUIT FOR HIS MONKEY AND THE TAILOR SAYS "I CAN MAKE YOU ONE FOR THREE BITS IF HE'S THREE FEET TALL'N SIX BITS IF HE ISN T" AND THE CUSTOMER SAYS "BREAT BUT WHY IS IT CHEAPER F HES THREE FEET TALL." AND THE TAILOR SAYS "BECAUSE I CAN USE THE SAME PATTERN I USE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER ."
I HEARD MR FILGATE TELL IT TO MR BLAKELY..
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FUNNIER IF I TOLD IT RIGHT..
PLEASE DON'T HAVE MR FILGATE ARRESTED "

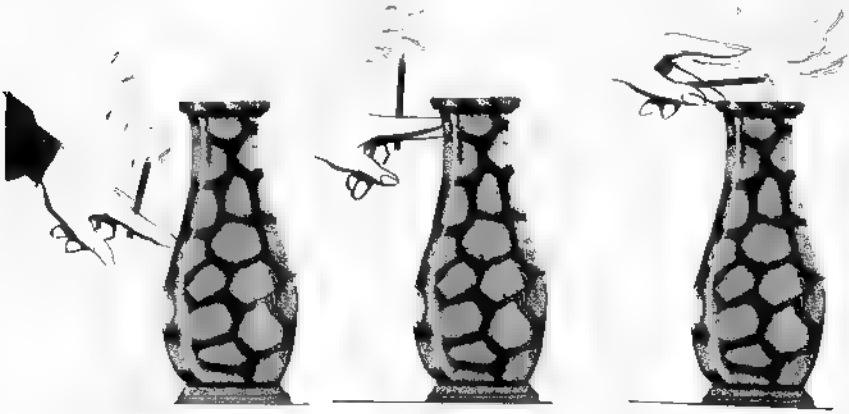
T H E R E S A

OF COURSE, WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER RESIGNED AND ASTORIA LEFT, ALL OF THAT CHANGED.
TO BE PERFECTLY FRANK, M'SIEU, I FELT BETRAYED - COMPLETELY WITHOUT RESOURCE
I FLED TO THE LOWER FELDAN EMBASSY AND EXPRESSED TO THE DEPUTY LIASON OFFICER THE EXTENT OF THE PITIABLE SITUATION IN WHICH I FOUND MYSELF
SMOKE, M'SIEU ?
I THOUGHT NOT YOU DON'T SEEM THE TYPE
HE TOLD ME
:PUFF:
I WAS A LONELY CHILD AND THAT HE WOULD DO ALL WITHIN HIS POWER TO ASSURE MY SAFETY AND THAT I WAS NOT TO WORRY
HE INSTALLED ME AT HIS ESTATE AS A GOVERNESS FOR HIS CHILDREN FOR A TIME, ALL WAS PEACEFUL AND I FELT SECURE

THEN HE BEGAN VISITING MY ROOM LATE AT NIGHT HE WOULD STROKE MY HAIR AND TELL ME I WAS HIS LITTLE FLOWER AND ASK IF I KNEW HOW FOND HE WAS OF ME

ONE NIGHT, HE WEPT AND TOLD ME HE NO LONGER LOVED HIS WIFE AND THAT HE WISHED ME TO BE WITH HIM ALWAYS DESERTION WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION BECAUSE OF HIS CAREER

I TOLD HIM I COULDN'T CONSIDER HIS OFFER AT LEAST NOT WHILE I RESIDED IN HIS WIFE'S HOME IT WOULDN'T BE, PROPER



HE FOUND ME A SPACIOUS APARTMENT FACING ONTO EMBASSY PARK AND PROVIDED ME WITH A GENEROUS ALLOWANCE

HIS VISITS WERE INFREQUENT OF COURSE BECAUSE OF HIS MANY RESPONSIBILITIES.. AND I FOUND MYSELF WITH A GREAT DEAL OF SPARE TIME.

I BEGAN ENTERTAINING SMALL DINNER PARTIES FOR THE CREAM OF TEHRAN SOCIETY. MY SALONS BECAME WELL KNOWN AND INVITATIONS WERE MUCH SOUGHT-AFTER BY THE BETTER FAMILIES

MY PATRON DISAPPROVED AND ONE DAY HE ARRIVED IN NO FIT STATE TO BE RECEIVED BY A LADY HE INFORMED ME THAT HE INTENDED TO LEAVE HIS WIFE, REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES AND DEMANDED TO KNOW IF I WOULD AGREE TO MARRY HIM

I TOLD HIM I NEEDED MORE TIME TO CONSIDER IT AND HE FLEW INTO A TERRIBLE RAGE HIS ACCUSATIONS, ALL UNFOUNDED OF COURSE, WERE MOST UNPLEASANT HE CALLED ME VILE NAMES AND TOLD ME HE WAS HAVING ME EVICTED AND CANCELLING MY ALLOWANCE

HE SAID HE WOULD SEE ME BEGGING FOR COPPERS IN THE FISH MARKETS AND STORMED OUT

HE RETURNED LATER THAT NIGHT AND THREW HIMSELF AT MY FEET

HE BEGGED FOR MY FORGIVENESS HE HAD BROUGHT THE DEEDS TO HIS LAND IN THE LOWER CITY AND THESE HE PRESSED UPON ME WITH URGENT ENTREATIES THAT I NOT DESPISE HIM...

WHEN HE LEFT, I SENT THE DEEDS BY COURIER TO HIS WIFE ALONG WITH A NOTE EXPLAINING ALL THAT HAD TRANSPIRED AND ASKING HER HELP IN ENDING HIS HARASSMENT OF ME..

EVIDENTLY, SHE INFORMED THE SENIOR OFFICIALS AT THE EMBASSY AND THEY TERMINATED HIS POST I UNDERSTAND SHE HAS SINCE LEFT FOR NEW SEPPIA TO REJOIN HER FAMILY.

HE CAME ONCE MORE TO MY APARTMENTS AND GAVE ME A CASHIER'S CHEQUE FOR SOME THREE THOUSAND CROWNS AND A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO YOU. A FORGERY, OF COURSE, ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATIONERY

HE ASKED ME TO PETITION YOU FOR SOME GOVERNMENT JOB OR OTHER. HE SAID I WAS WELL THOUGHT-OF IN THE HIGHER OFFICES OF THE GOVERNMENT

HE SAID IF I WOULD JUST DO THIS ONE LAST THING FOR HIM, HE WOULD NEVER BOTHER ME AGAIN IN ANY WAY.

I ACCEPTED THE MONEY AND THE LETTER FULLY INTENDING TO REPORT THE MATTER TO THE FEDERAL COURTS AND TO, ONCE AND FOR ALL, HAVE DONE WITH HIM

BUT, THE MORE I CONSIDERED IT, THE MORE I REALISED THAT IT WAS A RARE OPPORTUNITY THAT I MIGHT BE FORFEITING BECAUSE OF MY FOOLISH PRIDE

A RARE OPPORTUNITY FOR US BOTH, MSIEU

I TRUST YOU'LL FORGIVE ME IF I'M BLUNT AND TO THE POINT

YOU HAVE BEEN AND NO DOUBT WILL CONTINUE TO BE A BEACON OF LEADERSHIP FOR OUR YOUNG CONFEDERATION

BUT IN THE SOCIAL CIRCLES I FREQUENT, YOU HAVE A REPUTATION AS A... PLEASE FORGIVE ME... AS A BOOR

YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE STANDARDS EXPECTED OF ONE IN YOUR LOFTY POSITION ARE EXCEPTIONAL TO SAY THE LEAST...

TRIVIAL CONCERNS TO YOU, NO DOUBT TOO FEW COURSES AT A STATE DINNER THE WRONG WINE... GARISH DRAPERIES. GROTESQUE SILVERWEAR

BUT FOR THOSE BRED TO THE FINER THINGS THE STAMP IS UNMISTAKABLE

UNMISTAKABLE, BUT MOST FORTUNATELY NOT IRREVOCABLE
YES... HERE I AM CHATTERING AWAY AND YOU ARE TOO MUCH THE GENTLEMAN TO INTERRUPT
I'M TERRIBLY SORRY TO HAVE TAKEN SO MUCH OF YOUR TIME
SHOULD YOU WISH TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS FURTHER
AT YOUR CONVENIENCE
I WILL LEAVE YOU MY CARD
ADIEU, M'SIEU

end

A UNIQUE STORY

SCRATCH

PART TWO

LAST ISSUE, KIDMUND, LOST IN A SUDDEN FOG, STEPPED INTO A BOOK SHOP, WHERE HE WAS GIVEN A BOOK OF ANCIENT SPELLS. ON A WHIM, KIDMUND READ A DEMON SUMMONING SPELL ALOUD... AND SCRATCH APPEARED.

OKAY, I ADMIT THAT I CALLED YOU. BUT I HAD NO IDEA THE SPELL WAS REAL. WHAT NOW?
THIS IS NOT WHAT KIDMUND EXPECTED.
ONLY ONE THING I CAN DO, KID...

..ESCAPE, FOR STARTERS! THEN, MAYBE I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING!
MAN! HOW CAN ANY-ONE THAT SMALL DRINK SO MUCH WITHOUT EVEN USING THE BATHROOM?

WHAT TO DO NOW?!
THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT KIND OF POWERS HE'S GOT!
WHAT DO YOU DO WITH A DEMON? IF I DON'T KEEP HIM AMUSED, HE MIGHT BLOW UP THE WORLD OR SOMETHING..
HMM.. MAYBE I COULD GET US ON "REAL PEOPLE."
UH OH.. THAT MIST IS BACK! IF HE FOLLOWED ME, HE MIGHT.. WAIT!
IT'S THE BOOK STORE! I FOUND IT AGAIN!
BOOK
OPEN
SCREECH!
BOY, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU! I...
YOU HAVE SUMMONED THE HALF-DEMON SCRATCH, BUT YOU CAN NOT CONTROL HIM.
HEY, YOU CAN TALK! BUT HOW DID YOU KNOW...
SILENCE. FETCH THE BOOK, SIGN IT.. THEN RETURN IT TO ME.
THE HALF DEMON WILL THEN BE IN THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO KNOW HOW TO USE IT.
ABOVE ALL, HE MUST NOT SUSPECT YOUR INTENTIONS! NOW GO!!
HEY, YOU JUST STAY PUT AND I'LL BE BACK LIKE JUMPIN' JACK FLASH!
MINUTES LATER
I'M NOT SURE THINGS SMELL RIGHT, HERE. WHY DID THE GUY GIVE ME THE BOOK TO BEGIN WITH?
UH OH.. THE LIGHT'S ON. SCRATCH'S AWAKE!
HEY, KID.
I GOT HUNGRY, SO I RAIDED THE KITCHEN. KID, YOU GOTTA START BUYING CHUNKY WHITE TUNA.
THIS STUFF IS TOO OILY.. TASTES LIKE CAT DROPPINGS.
UH.. SURE, SCRATCH.. SURE...
GOOD. ALL THAT OIL.. YOU'LL HAVE ZITS ON YER ZITS. OH, AND WHILE YOU'RE OUT, GET A PIZZA AND ANOTHER SIX PACK, HUH?
WHAT?! YOU ATE ALL MY FOOD AND YOU WANT MORE?!
THAT DOES IT! I'M GONNA..
..I MEAN.. SURE! I'LL GO OUT AND GET SOME MORE FOOD RIGHT NOW!

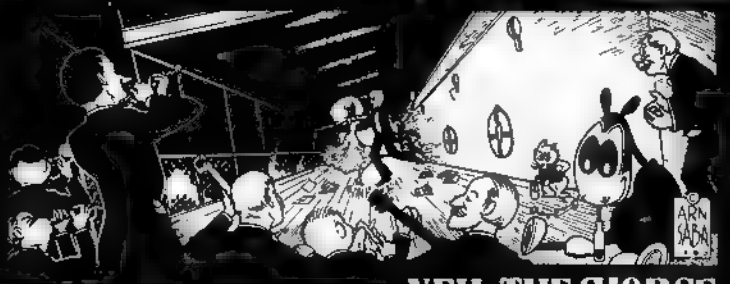
YEAH, I'LL GET SOME FOOD, ALL RIGHT.. AFTER I GET RID OF MY PEST OF A HOUSE GUEST!
I'LL JUST GRAB THE BOOK... HMM.. WHAT WAS IT THE SHOP KEEPER SAID?" THE HALF-DEMON WILL THEN BE...
IN THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO KNOW HOW TO USE IT? HMM...
AGAIN, MINUTES LATER--
HEY! I'M BACK WITH THE BOOK!
HAVE YOU SIGNED IT, AS ORDERED?
YEAH, HERE IT.. OH, NO.
AT LAST.. AT LAST!!
THE BOOK IS AGAIN OURS, AS IS THE DEMON, THANKS TO THE HUMAN SCUM! HA HA HA!
PITIFUL BUG! IT IS TRUE THAT SINCE ONLY A HUMAN MAY WORK THE INCANTATIONS OF THIS BOOK, WE NEEDED ONE.. BUT THAT NEED IS DONE!
NOW, SCRATCH IS OURS... HIS POWER IS ADDED TO OUR OWN! WE NOW HAVE THE STRENGTH TO BREAK AWAY FROM THE NETHER ZONE AND IMPRISON THE HUMAN RACE - EXCEPT YOU, BOY, FOR YOU, WE GRANT DEATH...
AT THE HAND OF THE ONE YOU HAVE BETRAYED.. THE ONE WHO COULD HAVE SAVED YOU!
HALF-DEMON.. APPEAR!
-APPEAR AND DESTROY THIS SCUM!
SC.. SCRATCH?
OBEY US, SLAVE! YOU HAVE NO CHOICE!
I'M AFRAID HE'S RIGHT, KID.. I GOT NO CHOICE. I'M SORRY. I HOPE IT DON'T HURT.
!!!
WELL, HERE GOES. OOPS! WAIT A SEC...
STOP STALLING! OBEY US AND DESTROY HIM!

WHAT IF THE KID WASN'T AS DUMB AS YOU THOUGHT?
SEE, THE BOOK WAS SO OLD, IT MIGHT'A FALLEN APART...
YOU KNOW, THE BINDING COULD'A COME UNDONE...
AND IF IT DID.. WHAT IF THE KID STUCK SOMETHIN' ELSE INSIDE THE COVER? SOMETHIN' LIKE...
A PHONE BOOK!
YEAH, LIKE A PHONE BOOK. GOOD MOVE! GUESS I DON'T HAVE'TA KILL YA AFTER ALL!
AAA!
PERHAPS NOT, SCRATCH.. BUT THIS I SWEAR...
YOU BOTH SHALL SURELY DIE FOR THIS!
HOO BOY! OUTTA THE FRYING PAN...
Y'WANNA FIGHT, HUH? SURE, BY ALL MEANS...
ASSUMING YOU GOT THE GUTS AN' THE MUSCLE...
..AN I DON'T THINK YOU GOT EITHER!
JUST BEIN' HERE AT ALL, IN A PHYSICAL FORM, MUST BE A CONSIDERABLE STRAIN!
YA ALSO HAD TO KEEP UP YER PHONY BOOK STORE FRONT. MORE HEAVY MAGIC!
..ENOUGH WORK TO HAVE EXHAUSTED ALL OF YOU FACE IT YOU GAMBLED THE KID WOULD COME BACK WITH TH' BOOK...
..AN YOU LOST! LOOK! YER ALREADY FADIN' AWAY, BACK TO WHERE YA BELONG!
BUT WE WILL RETURN, FOOLS! RETURN TO DESTROY YOU...
DESTROY...
YEAH, YEAH. SAME OLD RECORD.
GEEZ! IF I HADN'T SWITCHED THE PAGES...
..IT REALLY WOULD'A BEEN CURTAINS FOR US. ME, I WAS JUST KIDDIN' YOU.
..THOSE GUYS PLAY FOR KEEPS. BUT...IF YOU TOOK ME SO SERIOUSLY ABOUT DESTROYIN' THE EARTH BEFORE..
WHY DIDN'T I DELIVER THE REAL THING? I ALMOST DID.
..BUT THE WHOLE SET UP WAS FISHY. THE CLINCHER WAS WHAT YOU SAID WHEN I GOT BACK.
WHAT, MY CONSENIAL PERSONALITY?
NAW. I FIGURED THAT EVEN IF YOU HAD THE POWER TO DESTROY THE WORLD, YOU WOULDN'T BE LIKELY TO...
..IF YOU WERE TOO LAZY TO GO OUT FOR YOUR OWN BEER AND PIZZA.
WELL, MAYBE NOT ..BUT I STILL GOT A SURPRISE OR TWO IN ME.
END

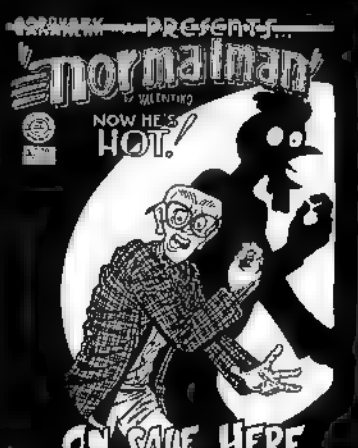
EVEN MORE IN '84

CEREBUS

JOURNEY



NEIL THE HORSE



ON SALE HERE

NORMALMAN

Published by
AARDVARK-
VANAHEIM

FLAMING CARROT

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AARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRESENTS

UNIQUE STORIES

YOU INSUFFERABLE MORON TOLD YOU TO WASH THE ELEPHANT NOT SHOOT IT
THOSE WERE MY EXACT WORDS
O FER THE LUVA MIKE
IF YOU MAKE FACES LIKE THAT, YOUR FACE MIGHT FREEZE THAT WAY
BAH. NEW DECK! I AIN'T BETTIN' MY LAST JAR OF BUTTERPEE ON A HAND LIKE THAT!

Adventures in Limbo

BOB BURDEN #61 April-#63 June

BECAUSE YOU ARE MY WIFE THAT AUTOMATICALLY MAKES YOU A MOTHER CORRECT?
FILBERT RAZZMA!
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS
I HOPE YOU ARE GLAD TOO!
R

Ricky Robot

JERRY SIEGEL #64 July-#65 August

Wish Zone

TOM STAZER #66 Sept.-#67 Oct

EVEN MORE IN '84

the Jade Princess

MICHAEL CHERKAS #68 Nov.-#70 Jan.

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

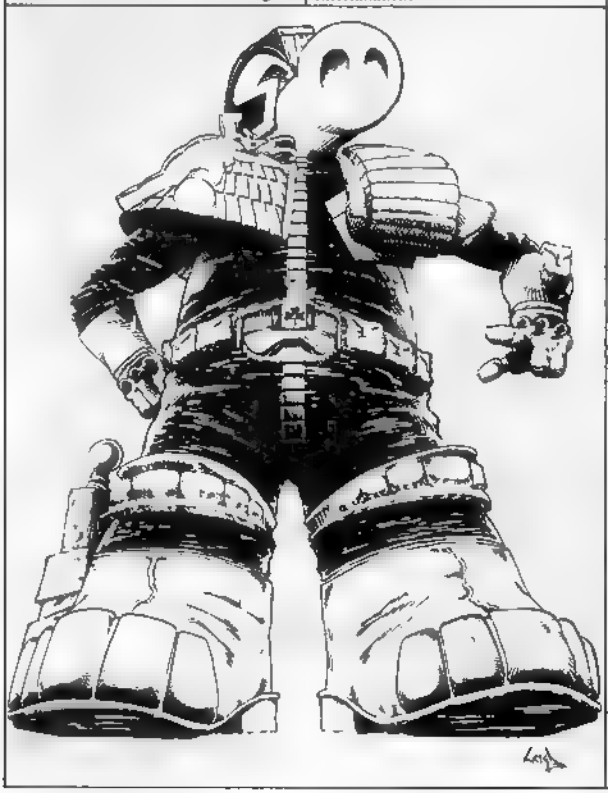
Dear Dave

Thank you, you've shown that it's possible for a comic to contain a consistent show of intelligent, thought-provoking and humorous material

You have an ability to create believable characters with credible motivations and razor-sharp dialogue that is sound in very few of your contemporaries, Alan Moore (Marvelman, "V", Captain Britain and now Swamp thing) being the only exception that comes to mind.

The only criticism I would make is that to the casual reader Cerebus must be very diff.cult to understand Issue 57 is a good case in point Anybody picking it up as their first Cerebus, would feel they had come into the story halfway through, but if they then bought #56, I cannot help but feel they would be even more confused. Please don't misunderstand me. I have no wish to have an idiot box containing a synopsis at the start of each issue and can think of nothing more constructive then recommending "Swords" to prospective Cerebus buyers. I just feel it's a great shame that the book's inaccessibility on a single issue basis, must cost a large number of sales.

Thank you for the many hours of entertainment



Respectfully Yours,

Leigh Baulch
58 Arundel Drive,
South Harrow, Middlesex
HIA 8PP

While I have considered the possibility that the complicated storyline limits the sales on Cerebus, I don't think the situation is of crisis proportions. Cerebus is doing well enough to keep going as well as keep me going. We may not add a thousand new readers every month, but we tend not to lose the faithful once converted, either. If the circulation is still at 20,000 when the book reaches issue 100, I might get a little worried -- but right now I just try to be content with what success we've had to date and look forward to getting bigger. By the way, Leigh did the "Judge Cerebus" piece on this page. Neat, huh?

* * * * * * * * * * *

Dear Folks,

I received my monthly comics-by-mail this weekend, just finished Cerebus 56-57 and wanted to comment A.S.A.P.

So Cerebus is married. Well, that explains the Christmas card you all sent, from "Prime Minister Cerebus and Mrs. the Aardvark". I was very confused. Actually, I rather like the idea, my best friend (the one who introduced me to Cerebus) just recently got married, so our friend the Earth Pig has a lot of weirdness to look forward to

And I think Sophia should continue to wear Cerebus' vest, although I was relieved to see him get rid of her chainmail brassiere. I also found myself empathizing with Cerebus' hangover, since I had one at the time I read it

Women! Cerebus is a fool. I have known only one female who even came close to the Countess or Astoria or Jaka, and here he is going from one to another as though there were an endless supply of them. Send him home. Bring back Jaka. Something

I am innoculating my roomate with Cerebus even as we speak. Wish me luck.

Later,

Don Lee

Don Lee
ATU Box 969
Russellville, AR., 72801

"Women! Cerebus is a fool." That just about sums it up, Don. I doubt that bringing back Jaka qualifies as a solution. Let's see if he can learn anything from Sophia first, shall we?

* * * * * * * * * * *

Dear Dave and Deni,

"Oh. That. At least twelve times..." You know, I didn't think Cerebus had it in him. But then again, just looking at him

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tells you he doesn't have it outside of him.

Best wishes.

Daniel Pei
4120 Brooklyn Ave NE Apt. 305
Seattle WA., 98105

P.S. I must offer my sincere apologies for making such a crude and tasteless joke. I don't know what came over me

It's okay, Daniel, it's a crude and tasteless issue you were commenting on. And if I'm going to hell in a handbasket, I'm going to want lots of company.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Yes we have no bananas.

It has recently occurred to me that I've never written you guys one of those horrible letters that rip apart everything you've ever done in Cerebus and make you feel like dying. This is an enormous mistake on my part, and I must apologize. I can only hope that the following paragraphs can somehow make up for those months of lonely neglect.

I'm sorry Dave, but you're not fooling anybody. Cerebus is a failure — a large, dead fish lying half-rotted in the sun, gagging on its own aromatic stench. Your excellent artwork, stories, characters, even Deni's swell "Notes from the Publisher" — none of these can rectify (nice word) the ghastly-horrible (compound, new word) mistake that has danced through the book like an insane ballerina since issue #1.

What mistake, you ask? What is your Achilles Heel, your Dragon's Dick? Why it should be laughably obvious...

You've never included Scooby Doo in your book. Not once. (Ha! You thought I wouldn't notice, didn't you?) Really, Dave, you must think I'm an idiot... (I feel obliged to throw you a straight line.) I remember when I bought my first issue of Cerebus. "Cerebus?" I thought to myself. "Maybe Scooby Doo appears therein!" Of course, I was wrong. I'm sure you don't care that you dashed the hopes of a runny-nosed little boy, Dave, but I think your attitude is very wormy.

I bought the next issue, and the next. Still no Scooby. Being a patient runny-nosed little boy, I waited (bided my time, you might say). Then one day the "High Society" storyline was introduced. "Aha! Dave was saving th' Scoob for the right story!" I mean, with the words "High Society" on the cover, how could I think of anything else? My hopes were dashed, smashed, and pissed on in the wind.

Oh, Dave, Dave, oh, Deni, Deni, must you taunt me so? I trusted you like you were a close relative (not Uncle Moosky -- he sold me into white slavery when I was ten)! I think you're the meanest people who ever lived (excluding, of course, my Uncle Moosky). With folks like you running around, it's no wonder people have trouble finding off-sized hats.

Sincerely,

Mike Bannon
2453 Martin Drive,
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

P.S. How about the weather, huh? I hear there's a low-pressure front moving in. Isn't weather neat?

And speaking of going to hell in a handbasket, I'd like you all to meet my co-pilot and tail-gunner Mike Dubuque of Bannon, Iowa.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Dear Dave:

In the past I have glanced thru Cerebus while at the local comic store. While I admired the artwork I found the plot to be confusing and had no idea who all these people were or what they were doing or why. When the Wolverroach trio came out I bought all three. (I like a good parody). After reading them I discovered what a fascinating world you had developed. The next day I returned to the store and ordered all the back issues and swords books. Having just finished reading the lot I would like to say that I enjoyed it more than any other comic series I have ever read. The pacing is superb, each story flows realistically into each other. The characters are believable (if you can accept the aardvark idea) and behave true to their beliefs. The plots are intriguing, drawing you into what's happening, not just observing. The politics are true to life, always changing and developing, though rarely as expected. When you finish an issue you leave speculating on what it means, what will come of it and wondering what is in store next. As for humor, every issue has a good laugh in it. This balances out the intrigue quite well.

All in all, I feel this is an exceptional series.

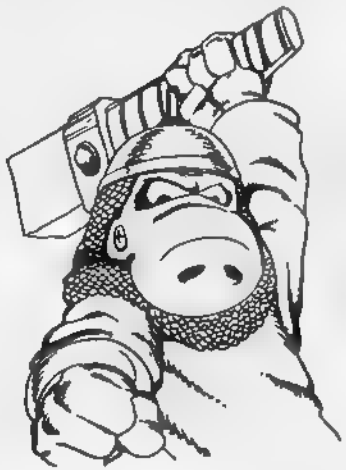
A few requests to finish up:

1. Could you please put in a detailed map in a future issue? It would be invaluable for reference.

2. Along those lines, could you see fit to install a "what's happening" column, to keep us informed on who did what to whom and what group is doing what to another group? This would eliminate the need for 'mind games' every five issues. It needn't be too specific, just enough to let us know what the political mood is, like the Times and Sun one pagers.

3. If you don't favor that idea, how about a year end wrap-up in the form of a two or three page essay by Suenteus Po or a state of the union address by Lord Julius? (That would leave us more in the dark than before.)

4. The other characters in the story are very interesting in their own right. Although they might not warrant their own series, it would be enjoyable to see a few solo stories in the back like the meeting between the Abbess of



The above illustration is the uncoloured version of a panel from the second "Tales of the Young Cerebus" which I and Gerhard (say "hi" to the good people, Ger) will be submitting to Archie Goodwin and Jo Duffy for a future issue of Epic Magazine. Naturally enough, it's called "A Friendly Reminder".

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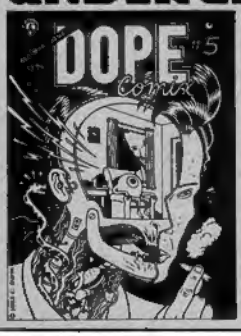

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Goodabbey and Lord Julius. Do you think you can include a back-up feature in future issues that would cover such events?

Finally, could you print this letter? I am anxious to hear your reply.

Your new fan

Paul Lemoie

1. I've been toying with this idea for a while now and it just might appear as a story in #61 (tricky!). If it doesn't appear in #61, it means I chickened out again. Stay tuned.

2. The political mood is basically an urge to get everything in the Feldwar Valley back to a normalcy that never existed in the first place. Weisshaupt is playing on this urge to return to good old-fashioned values. The fact that change is inevitable means he will inevitably be perceived as a failure unless he can find a way to introduce a series of good old-fashioned changes to keep things the same. Sounds impossible, right? That's what the Kevillists, Cirinists, Illusionists, Republicans et al will be trying to get across to potential allies. The biggest problem is introducing characters with a "Big Picture" overview and no vested interest to promote. Mostly those two qualities are mutually exclusive.

3. Why on Earth are you proposing something that would leave you "more in the dark than before"? Your masochism is showing.

4. Actually these three issues of short stories are intended to accomplish this -- giving you an idea of what the different characters are thinking and doing when Cerebus isn't around.

* * * * * * * * * *

Dear Dave

I have produced many sounds while reading Cerebus. I snickered at Necross Ha Ha Ha the Mad. I snorted at "Mind Game I". I bawled (with an audible cardiac snap) at "The Night Before". I chortled at the Moon Roach's "self-defenestration". I roared at the "Wuffa-wuffa-wuffa-WHAM!" page in "The Deciding Vote". I cackled at the rotating pages of "The Last Stand". I sniffed at the parting of Cerebus and the Regency Elf. I giggled (with regular whoops) throughout "Exodus". I guffawed when the Countess gave Cerebus some egg salad. Throughout its huh, this book has regularly caused enough titters, sniggers, crows, sobs, sighs, huzzahs, ha-has, hee-hees, ho-hos and assorted yuk-yuks to drown out a battery of howitzers. But I seriously doubt that the sound I made when I flipped to page 2 of #57 and saw Cerebus in Sophia's chain-mail bikini has ever before been emitted by human lungs. Next issue I plan to read with a tape recorder going. Would you like a copy?

An admirer,

Peter Cashwell
H/C 9, Grosvenor Place
Grosvenor Street
Manchester, M1 7HR
England

Just what I always wanted -- a cassette of Pete Cashwell emitting sounds never before emitted by human lungs. And they say this job has no rewards.

* * * * * * * * * *

Dear Dave:

Perhaps I should be the last fellow in the world to bring this up but I have to ask ... It seems that lately ... Well, this is a rude question, I know ... but is it my imagination, or does Cerebus letter column have one foot in the *Twilight Zone?*

Yours with a Truly Grotesque Amount of Sincerity,

Mike Bannon
2453 Martin Drive,
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

Boop-a-boopa-boop-a-boopa (insert favourite Rod Serling impression).

* * * * * * * * * *

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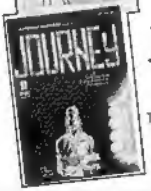

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